

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 1420  
By Bunch

A RESOLUTION to honor and commend Dr. Charles Paul Conn for twenty years of meritorious service as President of Lee University in Cleveland, Tennessee.

WHEREAS, it is appropriate that the members of this legislative body should honor those committed and talented college administrators who in their years of service have performed with uncommon devotion and enthusiasm; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Charles Paul Conn is one such estimable citizen who has served for twenty years with acumen and alacrity as President of Lee University, a private, comprehensive university located in Cleveland, Tennessee, in the foothills of the Appalachian Mountains; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Conn has served with probity and compassion, distinguishing himself through his leadership and commitment, while honoring the mission of Lee University to provide academic excellence in a Christ-centered environment; and

WHEREAS, Charles Paul Conn holds M.A. and Ph.D. degrees in psychology from Emory University in Atlanta, and has subsequently spent three years at Harvard University as a postdoctoral Visiting Scholar; his undergraduate degree is in Religion from Lee College; and

WHEREAS, prior to becoming President, Dr. Conn served on the Lee College psychology faculty for fifteen years. Holding the rank of Professor, he won the school's highest award for "Excellence in Teaching" and served as Chair of the Department of Behavioral Sciences; he has also taught at Appalachian State University in North Carolina and has published his research in various journals, including the *Journal of Experimental Psychology* and the *Journal of Verbal Learning and Verbal Behavior*; and

WHEREAS, in 1984, Dr. Conn was appointed Vice President of Institutional Advancement at Lee College; he served in this position for two years until commencing his

tenure as President, and has continued teaching in the Department of Behavioral and Social Sciences throughout his administration; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Conn assumed the office of President at Lee College at a time when it was a self-enclosed entity inside the City of Cleveland and Bradley County; he has since made Lee University a part of the community, and the community is now part of Lee University; and

WHEREAS, during Dr. Conn's twenty years as president, the university has seen significant growth; enrollment has increased from 1,214 to more than 3,900, the size of the budget has quadrupled, and the physical campus has been substantially enlarged and rebuilt; and

WHEREAS, Lee is emerging as a leader in higher education in the Southeastern region and was ranked in 2006 in the "Top Tier" in the South by *U.S. News and World Report*; Lee is also ranked by *Princeton Review's* "Best Colleges" and is now one of the 136 colleges named "Best in the Southeast"; and

WHEREAS, Lee University is now the largest private institution of higher education in East Tennessee, and the second largest private institution in Tennessee; Lee has the fifth largest enrollment among the 103 Christian colleges that are member institutions of the Council for Christian Colleges and Universities, and has added twenty major buildings necessary to accommodate the influx of new students; and

WHEREAS, Lee University's vital business of training nearly 4,000 young women and men for future careers makes a consistent impact on the Cleveland community, the Greater Tennessee River Valley, and the State as a whole, as it attracts students and faculty from across the country and around the world; Lee currently enrolls students from 49 of the 50 states in the Union and 58 foreign countries; and

WHEREAS, in addition to his scholarly publications, Dr. Conn has enjoyed astounding success in a second career as a freelance writer. He has authored or co-authored twenty popular books, sharing bylines with such personalities as Johnny Cash; professional football star Terry Bradshaw; businessmen Jack Eckerd and Richard DeVos; and many others; four of his books have been listed on the *New York Times* bestseller list, and his book *The Possible*

*Dream* was the seventh bestselling non-fiction book of 1977, according to *Publishers Weekly*; and

WHEREAS, his professional accomplishments notwithstanding, Dr. Conn is most grateful for the support and companionship of his wife and adjunct member of the piano faculty at Lee, Darlia McLuhan Conn. She entered Lee College as a freshman music major and earned a bachelor's degree in piano performance in 1977; she also holds a Master of Music degree in accompanying and coaching from the University of Tennessee at Knoxville; her strong commitment to the Arts finds expression in working with her husband to bring performers to Cleveland for the Presidential Concert Series at Lee, which is now beginning its 13<sup>th</sup> season; and

WHEREAS, Paul and Darlia Conn are the parents of three married children: Vanessa, Heather, and Brian, all of whom graduated from Cleveland High School; along with their spouses, the Conn children are all also graduates of Lee University; Dr. and Mrs. Conn are the proud grandparents of eight grandchildren; and

WHEREAS, throughout his estimable tenure as President of Lee University, Dr. Conn has demonstrated a remarkable ability to motivate others to reach their potential, winning the unbridled respect and admiration of the school's faculty, staff and students alike; and

WHEREAS, under his astute and visionary leadership, Lee University and the Cleveland and Bradley County community have instituted a partnership that benefits the students at Lee and the community as a whole; and

WHEREAS, Paul Conn exemplifies the spirit and allegiance to family and community that are characteristic of a true Tennessean; his dedication to his Lord and his involvement with improving the human condition through education are hallmarks of his life of commitment and achievement; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED FOURTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we hereby honor and commend Dr. Charles Paul Conn for twenty years of meritorious service to Lee University, the City of Cleveland, Bradley County, and the State of

Tennessee as President of that fine institution, and extend to him our best wishes for success in all his future endeavors.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.